

**Enter to Win!**  
**Prize: Starbuck's Gift Basket**

**This month's question:** Weekly educational visits have reduced COPD hospitalizations by what %?  
Email answers to [Answers@AspenCares.com](mailto:Answers@AspenCares.com). Include your contact info.

**ASPEN**  **Healthcare**

*Pulmonary Rehab Specialists*

Home Health & Hospice Services

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## A Strong Ally in COPD Management


The Centers for Disease Control list Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease as the nation's fourth leading cause of death. Annual healthcare costs total more than \$32 billion, with a large portion of those costs coming from repeated emergency room visits and hospital re-admissions.<sup>1</sup> For the highest possible quality of life and the longest possible independence, the American Lung Association recommends a multi-disciplinary team approach to COPD management with a treating physician overseeing care. With the combined services of **respiratory therapy**, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, and home health aides, you will find Aspen Healthcare to be an excellent ally in the optimal management of COPD. COPD home health services from Aspen Healthcare work to prevent future emergency room visits, improve function, prolong independence, and improve longevity.

**Skilled Monitoring & Teaching:** Research has shown weekly educational visits over two months to improve self-reported quality of life,<sup>1</sup> decrease hospitalizations by 27%, and decrease emergency department visits by 21%.<sup>2</sup> Our COPD management teaching can include reinforcement of medication teaching and correct usage of equipment such as oxygen tanks or ventilators. Nurses can review risk factors, teach patients to recognize symptoms of exacerbation, coach patients on nutritional interventions, and help patients develop an emergency action plan. Aspen nurses will assess your patient's response to

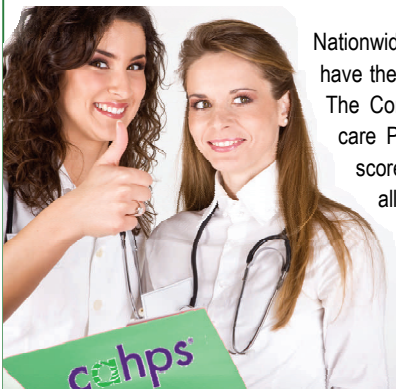


medications, assess for edema, listen for changes in heart condition, assess for sudden changes in mental status, and report relevant information to the physician. *If you have a patient making non-emergency visits to the emergency department or an increased number of calls to your office, this may be a sign that your patient would benefit from skilled monitoring and teaching plus our 24-hour on-call service.*

**Physical & Occupational Therapy:** A large meta-analysis confirms the long-standing belief that exercise therapy benefits patients with COPD. Salman et al. included 20 trials covering 979 patients.<sup>3</sup> Interestingly, trials that used only respiratory muscle training showed no significant difference compared to control groups receiving no rehabilitation. However, patients receiving lower-extremity training only (training that can be accomplished readily in your patients' homes) did significantly better on walking tests and on shortness of breath. A separate trial compared COPD patients receiving usual care to a supervised home exercise cohort receiving training immediately after hospital discharge.<sup>4</sup> Early exercise training at home improved exercise tolerance, improved dyspnea scores, improved quality of life, and reduced the number of subsequent exacerbations. Aspen's respiratory, physical, and occupational therapists stand ready to design home exercise programs or continue supervision for programs initiated at inpatient facilities. Therapists can also teach energy conservation techniques that improve independence at home.

**Nursing Assistants:** During periods when it may be unsafe for your patient to perform ADLs independently or when your patient is unable, we send aides to assist with personal care needs. This may include bathing, light housekeeping, meal preparation, etc. 

### Aspen Home Healthcare Leads the Nation in Patient Satisfaction



Nationwide, Medicare certified agencies have their patient satisfaction tracked by The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems. Aspen scores above national averages in all categories of patient satisfaction, and in the categories of patient care, communication, and likelihood to recommend. **Aspen ranks in the top 10% of the nation.**

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## References

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4. Murphy N, Bell C, Costello R. "Extending a home from hospital care programme for COPD exacerbations to include pulmonary rehabilitation." *Respir Med.* 2005; 99(10): 1297-302.